December 23: MARTYRDOM DAY OF SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

One of the few eminent builders of the Indian nation
a valiant warrior of the war of independence
a living portrait of bravery and sacrifice
a symbol of renunciation and penance
a noble soul and fearless patriot.

An appeal that he found irresistible
the call from Swami Dayanand Saraswati
to live and preach the ideals of the Sat Sanatan Vedic Dharma
and to serve the Arya Samaj.

Founded the Gurukul Kangri at Haridwar
as a unique seat of learning
in line with the ideals of the Vedic seers
to produce good and disciplined citizens
imbued with ancient Vedic ideals and a national outlook.

Founded several other institutions
for the uplift of the social, moral and cultural status of the people
for the education of girls and womenfolk.

Initiated the Shuddhi movement whereby
converted people were accepted as Hindus after the ‘Shuddhi Sanskara’
conferred the title of ‘Mahatma” to Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
upon the latter’s return from South Africa.

Founded two prominent dailies: 'Tej' in Urdu and ‘Arjun’ in Hindi
plunged headlong into the agitation under the leadership of Gandhiji
had a leading role in infusing life into the people

organised 'hartals' and protests against the Rowlatt Act
enacted by the British Government.

A valiant Arya Sanyasi who served the people
without any distinction of caste or creed
had the unique honour of preaching to the Muslims
from the pulpit of the greatest and
the most famous mosque of India,
the Delhi Jama Masjid.

Bare-breast, he dared a soldier
who threatened to fire at the crowd
to shoot him.

Architect of the historic Congress session
at Amritsar when Punjab was writhing
under the atrocities by the British Government
under martial law
introduced the programme
for eradication of untouchability which was adopted.

Withdrew his support to Congress
due to ideological differences
on the ‘Ghar vapasi’ programme
after Gandhi called upon him
to put an end to the Shuddhi movement.

Always stood in the front line
of the Arya Samaj movement
made the Arya Samaj a centre of power
contributed to its popularity
by his disinterested work
and exemplary practical life.

A towering personality
and a source of eternal inspiration.
lived up to a martyr's death

while on his sick bed
died at the gun shots
of a misguided assassin
on 23 December 1926.

Acharya Bramdeo MOKOONLALL

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Tributes to Swami Shraddhanand

…a firebrick in the furnace of Maharishi Dayanand (दयानन्द की भट्टी में ईंट, *Dayanand ki Bhatti mein īnta*)
…the crown jewel of the Gurukula system of education and the return of people misled by conversion (गुरुकुलीय व्यवस्था, शुद्धि आंदोलन का गौरव, *Gurukulīya vyavasthā, shuddhi āndolan ka gaurava*)
…proved his mettle by living as per the teachings of the Vedas and seers/rishis (मन वाणी और शरीर से ऋषि परम्परा को साकार किया, *mana vāni aur sharīra se rishi paramparā ko sākāra kiya*)
…gave new direction to society though his thoughts, words and deeds (अपने विचारों और कार्यों से समाज को नया दिशा दिया, *apne vichāron aur karyon se samāj ko naya disha diyā*)
…an ideal statesman in whose life each word, incident or action left its imprint on stone (ऐसे आदर्श महापुरुष जिसके जीवन में हर एक शब्द, घटना व काम पत्थर पे लकीर जैसा बन जाता था, *aise ādarsh mahāpurusha jiske jīvan mein har ek shabda, ghatnā va kāma patthar pe lakīr jaisa ban jāta thā*)
…unmoved by critics, blame, rejection, and defamation, he was focused on objectives (निन्दा बहिष्कार अपमान भी हुवा लेकिन लक्ष्य को नहीं छोड़ा, *nindā bahishkār apmāna bhi huvā lekin lakshya ko nahin chodā*)

Acharya Bramdeo MOKOONLALL